

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 4-28 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 4-7, 9, 11, 15, 17, 19, and 20 are amended. No new subject matter is believed to have been added by these amendments. The Examiner is thanked for indicating that the subject matter of claims 1, 4-8, and 12-28 is allowed.

CLAIM OBJECTIONS

Claims 1 and 4-6 are objected to for informalities. The Applicant believes that the above amendments to claims 1 and 4-6 overcome the Examiner's informality objections. Reconsideration of these objections is respectfully requested.

Claims 7, 9, 15, 17, 19, and 20 have been amended to correct minor editorial informalities.

Claim 11 stands objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Claim 11 has been written in independent form.

35 U.S.C. § 103 REJECTIONS

Claims 9 and 10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) for obviousness based upon French Patent No. 2766884 to Ludger in view of German Patent No. 19732204 to Herzog. In view of the following remarks, the Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of these rejections.

According to independent claim 9, the present invention is directed to a karabiner having a generally C-shaped body having free ends curved towards each other and forming a gap therebetween. The karabiner includes a gate for closing the gap. The gate is formed of a wire member shaped and located on one free end of the body, such that the gate

is constrained to close the gap. Another free end of the body has a slot for receiving a shaped end of the gate. The slot has from the other end of the body a first narrow part to accommodate the wire member leading to a wider second part to accommodate the shaped end of the gate.

The Herzog Patent teaches a pin extending transversely from the gate and received within a slot of the karabiner body. A locking member engages the pin to hold the gate in a closed position. The slot is not shaped or sized to correspond to a shaped end of the gate itself.

In the present invention, a keyhole shaped slot 38 is provided in the body of the karabiner for receiving a nut 36 on the end of the wire gate 20. The Herzog patent, conversely, illustrates an arrangement of a hook on the karabiner body that engages with a loop of a gate. A karabiner of the present invention on the other hand, has a nut on the gate that engages with a shaped slot in the karabiner body. The advantage of this arrangement is that both the nut and the slot can have a smooth profile which prevents ropes and the like from snagging (see page 7, second full paragraph.).

The Ludger patent discloses a karabiner having a generally C-shaped body with free ends curved towards each other. A gap is formed between the free ends. A gate is provided for closing the gap. The gate is a wire member located on one free end of the body. The other free end of the body has a slot for receiving an end of the gate. The Ludger patent also discloses that the wire is bent double to form the gate and has each free end further bent inward towards each other to locate in a different hole on opposite sides of the body, where one hole is above the other. The free end of the gate is shaped by bending the wire. The slot that accepts the end of the gate faces inward toward the body and is configured to engage a loop of the wire gate.

In the Ludger patent, the loop is on the gate and the hook is on the karabiner body. However, in the present invention the "hook" is the nut end of the gate and the "loop" is the slot of the karabiner body. The Ludger patent does not teach or suggest a slot on the other end of the karabiner body having a first narrow part to accommodate the wire gate leading to a wider second part to accommodate the shaped end of the gate. The Herzog patent discloses a slot for engaging an end of the gate, however the slot is not narrow to accept the wire member and then wider to accept a shaped end.

For the foregoing reasons, the Applicant believes that the subject matter of independent claim 9 is not rendered obvious by the Ludger patent in view of the Herzog patent. Reconsideration of the rejection of claim 9 is respectfully requested.

Claim 10 depends from and adds further limitations to independent claim 9 and is believed to be patentable for the reasons discussed hereinabove in connection with independent claim 9. Reconsideration of claim 10 is respectfully requested.

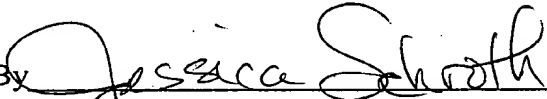
Appl. No.09/922,496
Amendment dated November 10, 2003
In Reply to Office Action of May 9, 2003
Attorney Docket No. 3265-011266

CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the rejections and allowance of pending claims 1 and 4-28 are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

WEBB ZIESENHEIM LOGSDON
ORKIN & HANSON, P.C.

By  _____

Jessica M. Schroth
Registration No. 47,102
Attorney for Applicants
700 Koppers Building
436 Seventh Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15219-1818
Telephone: (412) 471-8815
Facsimile: (412) 471-4094
E-mail: webblaw@webblaw.com